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FROM GOD TO HORSE

A MYTHOLOGICAL AND SEMASIOLOGICAL STUDY OF REVANTA
IN SANSKRIT AND GUJARATĪ/RAJASTHĀN *

Introductory remarks

Revanta belongs to the minor deities of the Hindu pantheon and does not figure very prominently in the textual sources and is sparsely attested to in the epigraphical material. Thus, in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of this divinity it is necessary to gather information from a variety of sources. Being a son of Sūrya he is closely associated with sun worship but has not received much attention by scholars though two contributions by B.N. Sharma deserve mention here¹. The author, who is primarily an art historian, has assembled a rather rich material in Sanskrit, which can be supplemented however, but he does not make any analysis of it and draws few conclusions from it. Sharma has fully documented the iconography of Revanta and it now permits us to see that the cult of this god, with beginnings in the Gupta period, came to touch virtually every region of India with a certain emphasis on Rājasthān and with the exception of large parts of the South. Earlier art historians had to base their conclusions on material

* As the condition of my eyes does not allow me to have direct access to research material, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to those friends and colleagues in Stockholm and Uppsala who generously have given their assistance to me during the preparation of my work. In particular I am indebted to Miss Irène Strindhed who indefatigably and joyfully has read out to me what I needed and who has also typed my manuscript.

1. *Revanta in Literature and Art*, in «Purāṇa», 13 (1971), pp. 133-50, repr. as *Revanta in Literature, Art and Epigraphs*, in «East and West», 23 (1973), pp. 155-68, enl. version with numerous plates as *The Iconography of Revanta*, New Delhi, 1975. L. P. PANDEY, *The Worship of Revanta in Ancient India*, in «Vishveshwaranand Indological Journal», VII: 1-2 (1969), pp. 134-36, is of slight scope. See also J. N. BANERJEA, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, Calcutta, 1956, pp. 442-44, and H. HÄRTEL, *Indische Skulpturen, I: Die Werke der frühindischen, klassischen und frühmittelalterlichen Zeit*, Berlin, 1960, pp. 37, 46, 68-70, and Tafel 36.

mainly stemming from Bengal, Bihār and Gujarāt². Isolated instances of the worship of Revanta are still to be found in India today e.g. at Kunyardi near Chitorgaṛh in Rājasthān³, at Kaman near Bharatpur⁴ and at Jageśvara in Almorā district⁵. Dictionaries and handbooks on Hinduism inform us about three salient features of Revanta: he is the son of the sun (*sūryaputra*), he is the lord of the *guhyaka* (*guhyakādhipati*) and he is the fifth Manu. In the following study that aspect of Revanta will be brought into strong relief that historically came to be the most significant one, namely his manifold association with horses. This study falls into three parts: 1) An outline of the myth of Revanta is given according to Sanskrit sources. 2) The particular connections that came to exist between Revanta and Western and Central India are emphasized on the basis of inscriptions in Sanskrit, Kannaḍa and Telugu and on evidence from Gujarātī and Rājasthānī. 3) The word *revanta* is examined in the light of Indian lexicographical and grammatical traditions and this also raises the more fundamental question of the so-called «artificiality» of a Sanskrit root. In our sources *revanta* appears in a multiplicity of forms such as *revanta/revamta*⁶, *raivata(ka)*⁷, *raivan-taka*⁸, *rebhanta*⁹ and typically New-Indian forms as *revāta*, *raivata/rainvata*.

Revanta in Sanskrit texts

The myth of Revanta constitutes a later, Purāṇic addition to a much larger mythical complex the beginnings of which reach back to early

2. See BANERJEA, *op. cit.*, and HÄRTEL, *op. cit.*, p. 46, «Revanta, einer der Söhne des Gottes Sūrya, ist eine in der indischen Kunst sehr selten dargestellte Gottheit. Die Verehrung dieses Gottes scheint sich wesentlich auf das östliche Indien und Gujarāt zu beschränken; dennoch muss die Skulptur dieses Gottes auf Tafel 36 seiner stilistischen Züge wegen nach Zentralindien gehören».

3. PANDEY, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

4. SHARMA, *The Iconography of Revanta*, p. 47.

5. SHARMA, *ibid.*, p. 50.

6. The alternative form *revanta* referring to the famous mountain in Gujarāt generally called Raivata, which is celebrated by Māgha in his *Śiśupālavadha* canto 4, is not recorded in the Sanskrit, Gujarātī and Rājasthānī dictionaries. Around 1230, however, Vijayasena composed his *Revamtagirirāsa* in Old Gujarātī where *revamta* refers to this very mountain. See K. M. MUNSHI, *Gujarāt and its Literature*, 3rd ed., Bombay, 1967, p. 134.

7. *raivataka*, in this sense, is not recorded in the dictionaries.

8. *raivanṭaka*, which occurs in the *Skandapurāṇa*, is not recorded in the dictionaries.

9. The peculiar form *rebhanta* is not recorded in the dictionaries and is only met with in some MSS of the *Kālikāpurāṇa*. This text is of Eastern Indian provenience and may betray some influence of Bengali phonology. In the Bengali script *v* is rendered *b* but medial *bh* is pronounced *v* and thus *var. lect. rebhanta* would preserve the original Skt phonem in *revanta*.

Vedic times. The Vedic material and the many problems connected with it as well as the Purāṇic elaborations of it have been studied by several scholars though none of them have discussed the rôle of Revanta¹⁰. Therefore, only the essential facts of the early development of the myth need to be recapitulated here in order to provide a background for an understanding of the figure of Revanta. *R̥gveda* 10, 17, vv. 1-2 read:

*tvāṣṭā duhitré vahatūṃ kṛṇotītīdām viśvaṃ bhūvanaṃ sámeti /
yamāsya mātā paryuhyāmānā mahó jāyā vivasvato nanāśa //
ápāgūhann amṛtām mārtyebhyaḥ kṛtvī sávarṇām adadur vivasvate /
utāśvīnāv abharad yāt tād āśīd ājahād u dvā mithunā saranyāḥ //*

Here it is stated, that Tvaṣṭṛ gave away his daughter Saranyū in marriage to Vivasvat. She, the mother of Yama, soon disappeared after her wedding. The gods concealed her, having created an identical woman (*savarṇām*) for Vivasvat. Saranyū gave birth to the two Aśvins but abandoned them. Interpretations of these laconic verses differ widely¹¹ and what we have here might be a mere mythical fragment but many germinal motives of the myth are clearly present. Of great importance to notice, however, is that the horse motif, the most conspicuous feature of the subsequent development, is missing. The mention of the two Aśvins (« the horse-men ») might have contributed to the tendency of later traditions to see an allusion to the horse already in the *R̥gveda*. The version of the myth given by Yāska in his commentary on the *R̥gvedic* stanzas shows it to be enriched by new elements:

*tvāṣṭrī saranyūr vivasvata ādityād yamau mithunau
janayām cakāra / sā savarṇām anyām pratīnidhāyāśvaṃ rūpaṃ
kṛtvā pradudrāva sa vivasvān āditya āśvaṃ eva rūpaṃ kṛtvā
tām anusṛtya sambabhūva tato 'śvinau jajñāte savarṇāyām manuḥ /
Nirukta 12.10*

10. M. BLOOMFIELD, *Contributions to the Interpretation of the Veda*, in JAOS, vol. 15 (1893), esp. pp. 172-88, analyzes the Vedic sources and some Avestan parallels; A. BLAU, *Puranische Streifen. I. Der Itihāsa von Saranyū in seiner Fortbildung durch die Purāṇa*, in ZDMG, 62 (1908), pp. 337-57, gives an account of the Purāṇic material and particularly of the *Harivaṃśa*; H. LOMMEL, *Vedische Einzelstudien*, in ZDMG, 92 (1949), esp. pp. 243-57, examines the relationship between Saranyū and her Purāṇic counterpart Samjñā. W. O'FLAHERTY has two stimulating books to her credit: in *Women, Androgynes and Other Mythical Beasts*, Chicago-London, 1980, pp. 174 ff., our myth is discussed within a comparative Indo-European context from an anthropological rather than from a philological perspective; *Hindu Myths*, Harmondsworth, 1975, pp. 60-70, contains translations with introductions and bibliographical references.

11. E.g. an interpretation in terms of nature mythology is rejected by Bloomfield but favoured by Lommel.

Here Vivasvat has become identified with the sun¹² and Saranyū (*tvāṣṭrī*) gives birth to twins (Yama and Yamī). Yet another child, Manu, is born from the *savarṇā* woman. Most important of all, Saranyū, having assumed the form of a mare, leaves her husband and he pursues her, having taken on the form of a stallion. From their union the Aśvins are born.

In the *Bṛhaddevatā* the myth is supplied with some further details. When Vivasvat mounts Saranyū his semen (*śukra*) falls to the ground. By the mere smelling of it (*āghrātāmātrāt*) she gives birth to the Aśvins whose names (Nāsatya and Dasra) are given:

tvāṣṭrīm prati jagāmāśu vājī bhūtvā salakṣaṇaḥ // 3 //
saranyūś ca vivasvantaṃ viditvā hayarūpiṇam /
maithunāyopacakrāma tām ca tatārūroha saḥ // 4 //
tatas tayos tu vegena śukraṃ tad apatad bhuvi /
upājighrac ca sā tv aśvā tac chukraṃ garbhakāmyayā // 5 //
āghrātāmātrāc chukrāt tu kumārāu saṃbabhūvatuḥ /
nāsatyaś caiva dasraś ca yau stutāv aśvināv iti // 6 //

Care should be taken not to read elements of the myth into the *Rgveda* that are first attested to in the *Nirukta* or the *Bṛhaddevatā*¹³.

The story of Vivasvat and Saranyū proved to be extremely fruitful and found its way into the *Harivaṃśa* and several Purāṇas: *Vāyupurāṇa*, *Brahmapurāṇa*, *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*, *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, *Śivapurāṇa*, *Brahmāṇḍapurāṇa*, *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*, *Matsyapurāṇa*, *Padmapurāṇa*. The two last-mentioned ones have a strong sectarian character and deviate from the others in many respects¹⁴. The Purāṇic recast of the old myth resulted in an expanded narrative with an increase in number of motifs and *dramatis personæ* and at times interwoven with other myths. The most elaborate version is that one given in the *Harivaṃśa*¹⁵. In two of

12. In *Rgveda* Vivasvat is not the sun but a human being as is also his Avestan counterpart Vivahvant. The definitive identification of Vivasvat with the sun took place in the *Brāhmaṇas*. Cf. BLOOMFIELD, *op. cit.*, and J. GONDA, *Die Religionen Indiens. I. Veda und älterer Hinduismus*, in «Die Religionen der Menschheit», Bd 11, Stuttgart, 1960, p. 92.

13. Thus, commenting on the *Rgvedic* hymn Sāyaṇa calls Saranyū the mother of both Yama and Yamī (*yamasya yamāś ca mātā*), refers to the mare (*sāśvarūpiṇī saranyūś tadāśvināv abharat*) and to the semen (*sambhogakāle retaḥ patitam āsit*). He even mentions Uttarakuru as the destination of Saranyū after she has left her husband, a Purāṇic element (*saranyūr nanāśa uttarān kurūn prati naṣṭā agacchad ity arthaḥ*). BLOOMFIELD, *op. cit.*, p. 173 n., presupposes the existence of the horse in the *Rgveda*. O'Flaherty with her synthetic approach regards the myth as a unit. Therefore the Vivasvat/sun identification and the idea of the mare are treated as original elements belonging already to the *Rgveda*.

14. BLAU, *op. cit.*, pp. 339-40, gives a short description of these Purāṇic versions of our myth.

15. The Sanskrit originals are conveniently consulted in W. KIRFEL, *Das Purāṇa Pañcalakṣaṇa. Versuch einer Textgeschichte*, Bonn, 1927, p. 281 (*Viṣṇupurāṇa*), pp. 284-94 (Textgruppe I) and pp. 295-98 (Textgruppe II). BLAU translates the text of the *Harivaṃśa* and records the variations and deviations of the Purāṇas.

these Purāṇas, the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* and the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* there are references to Revanta, probably the earliest ones¹⁶. The *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*, one of the oldest Purāṇas, still reflecting something of the epic tradition, has two slightly divergent versions of our myth (chs 105 and 106). Only one of them includes Revanta and that one together with the comparatively short version to be found in the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* belong to the secondary material of these works¹⁷. In its barest outlines the myth prior to the birth of Revanta runs as follows.

Vivasvat (the sun) has married Saṃjñā¹⁸, the daughter of Viśvakarman (with whom Tvaṣṭṛ has merged). She bears him three children, Yama, Yamī (also identified with the river Yamunā) and Manu Vaivasvata. Unable to endure the powerful radiance of her husband¹⁹ Saṃjñā betakes herself to the mythical northern country called Uttarakuru in order to practice penance. She has left her shadow (*chāyā*) behind who gives birth to Manu Sāvārṇi²⁰, Śanaīhcara (the planet Saturn) and a daughter Tapatī. Finally the deception is disclosed and the sun in meditation beholds Saṃjñā in the form of a mare and he himself having assumed the form of a stallion proceeds to Uttarakuru. Now the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*²¹ may speak for itself:

uttarāṃś ca kurūn gatvā bhūtvā 'śvo bhānur āgamat //
sā ca dṛṣṭvā tam āyāntam parapuṃso viśaṅkayā //
jagāma saṃmukhe tasya prṣṭharakṣaṇatatparā //
tataś ca nāsikāyogaṃ tayos tatra sametayoḥ //
vaḍavāyāṃ ca tat tejo nāsikābhyāṃ vivasvataḥ //

16. It is sometimes assumed e.g. (by MW) that the *Manusmṛti* contains a reference to Revanta:

svārociṣaś cottamaś ca tāmaso raivatas tathā //
cākṣuṣaś ca mahāteja vivasvatsuta eva ca // 1.62

This is but a bare list of Manus, Raivata being the fifth (Svayambhu is the first). Whether this Raivata is identical with our Revanta is an open question as no details are given and Raivata can also refer to other individuals. In some texts (probably for the first time in the *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa*) Revanta is counted as one of the Manus and two of his brothers are also called Manu. The connection of Revanta with the *Manusmṛti* might be a secondary one caused by the similarity of names.

17. The *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* version including the Revanta episod is not given in KIRFEL, *op. cit.* See also his statement about certain parts of the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, p. XXXVI.

18. Saṃjñā is a peculiar name and might be a sanskritized form of Pkt saṃjñā (Skt sandhyā). See LOMMEL, *op. cit.*

19. No reason is given in the Vedic tradition for Saranyū to leave her husband. BLOOMFIELD, *op. cit.*, interprets it as pointing to the impossibility of a union between a goddess and a mortal.

20. The Purāṇic *chāyā* has replaced the Vedic *savarṇā* from which, according to the *Nirukta*, Manu was born. To distinguish the two Purāṇic Manus the first one is given the name Vaivasvata and the second, born from the *chāyā*, is called Sāvārṇi. This latter expression then preserves the Vedic *savarṇā*.

21. *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*, Śrī Veṅkateśvara Steam Press, Bombay.

*devau tatra samutpannāv aśvinau bhiṣajām varau /
 nāsatyadasrau tanayāv aśvivaktrād vinirgatau //
 mārtaṇḍasya sutāv etāv aśvarūpadharasya hi /
 retaso 'nte ca revantaḥ khaḍgī dhanvī tanutradhṛk //
 aśvārūḍhaḥ samudbhūto bāṇatūṇasamanvitaḥ /
 tataḥ svarūpam amalāṃ darśayāmāsa bhānumān //* 105.7-12

The description of the union of Saṃjñā and the sun given here is reminiscent of the one in the *Bṛhaddevatā*. Saṃjñā receives the semen of the sun through her nose (*nāsikāyogam*) and the Aśvins, the divine physicians come out of her mouth. The entirely new element here is that when the semen has come to an end (*retaso 'nte*) Revanta is born. The word used for semen in the *Bṛhaddevatā* is *śukra* and in v. 9 above *tejas* but in this verse *retas* has been chosen, obviously to provide a fanciful etymology of the word *revanta*. Revanta is described as possessing a sword (*khaḍgi*), holding a bow (*dhanvī*), clad in armour (*tanutradhṛk*), mounted on a horse (*aśvārūḍhaḥ*) and supplied with arrows and quiver (*bāṇatūṇasamanvitaḥ*). Similar in content and wording is v. 75.24:

*retaso 'nte ca revantaḥ khaḍgī carmmī tanutradhṛk /
 aśvārūḍha samudbhūto bāṇatūṇasamanvitaḥ //*

The above-mentioned characteristics of Revanta make him a hunt-smān and a warrior²² and include the possibilities of connecting him with warfare and kingship. Some other verses throw further light on the figure of Revanta:

*aśvinau devabhiṣajau kṛtau pitṛāmahātmanā /
 guhyakādhipatitve ca revanto viniyojitaḥ //
 evam apy āha ca tato bhagavaṃ lokabhāvitaḥ /
 tvam apy aśeṣalokasya pūjyo vatsa bhaviṣyasi //
 araṇyādīmahādāvavairidasyubhayeṣu ca /
 tvām smariṣyanti ye martyā mokṣyante te mahāpadaḥ //
 kṣemaṃ buddhiṃ sukhaṃ rājyaṃ ārogyaṃ kīrtim unnatim /
 narāṇāṃ parituṣṭas tvam pūjitaḥ sampradāsyasi //* 105.20-23

Here it is stated that Revanta was appointed to the lordship of the *guhyaka* (*guhyakādhipatitve ca revanto viniyojitaḥ*). The *guhyaka* are attendants of Kuvera believed to reside on Mount Kailāsa inhabiting forests and caverns. Interesting to notice is their connection with Revanta as they are described as being half horses and half birds²³.

22. In the iconography Revanta is usually depicted mounted on a horse sometimes a caparisoned one, alone or surrounded by attendants. He is engaged in hunting, holding weapons and reins in his hands or at other times a cup or flowers. Cf. SHARMA, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

23. See E. W. HOPKINS, *Epic Mythology*, in « Grundriss der Indoarischen Philologie und Altertumskunde », Strassburg, 1915 (repr. New Delhi, 1974), p. 142.

The religious functions of Revanta are also clearly brought out in this passage. His father, the sun, prophesies about his worship among men. Those that call upon him when in dangerous situations like forests, conflagrations, enemies and robbers (*araṇyādīmahādāvavairidasyubhayeṣu*)²⁴ will be delivered. To those who pay homage to him security, intellect, happiness, sovereignty, health, fame and exalted position will accrue. The cult of Revanta from about this period is born out by some early-dated images²⁵. The version of our myth in the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* is rather short and quite close to the one in *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*. The Revanta episod is only briefly referred to

*tato vivasvān ākhyāte tayaivāraṇyasamsthītām /
samādhidrṣṭyā dadṛṣe tām aśvāṃ tapasi sthītām //*
*vājirūpadharaḥ to pi tasyāṃ devāv athāśvinau /
janayāmāsa revantaṃ retaso 'nte ca bhāskarāḥ //* 3,2,5-6

A stronger emphasis on the equine aspect of Revanta is to be seen in that much composite work called *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa*²⁶ (in existence at least in the 7th century). In the *nakṣatra* section Mārkaṇḍeya tells king Vajra about the birth of Saturn, Revanta's brother Śanaīḥcara (1.106.60-91). In that connection the Vivasvat/Saṃjñā story is told anew including the Revanta part. The concluding verses read as follows:

*bhūmau ca patitaṃ yac ca tābhyāṃ śukraṃ vimarditam /
tasmāt sośvāt samutpannaḥ kumāraḥ sūryasannibhaḥ //*
*tataḥ svarūpam āsthāya devadevo 'pi bhāskarāḥ /
svarūpaṇīm athādāya saṃjñāṃ tām svagrhaṃ yayau //*
*nāsatyau devabhiṣajau kṛtavān aśvināv ubhau /
tato vimardanāḥ jātāṃ putraṃ drṣṭvā divākaraḥ //*
*revanteti tadā tasya nāma cakre jagadguruḥ /
taṃ ca putraṃ uvācātha²⁷ sūryo grahagaṇeśvaraḥ //*
*yasmāt so 'śvāt samutpanno mattas tvaddīptadīdhitih /
pūjām āpsyasi so 'śvebhyas tasmān nityaṃ jagatpriyaḥ //*
*ye ca tvāṃ pūjayiṣyanti teṣāṃ vṛddhir bhaviṣyati /
śanaīscarasya te janma mayoktaṃ nṛpasattama //* 86-91

Noticeable here is that two of Revanta's qualities have come to the fore at the expense of the others. Stress is laid on the fact that he is at the same time the offspring of the sun and of a horse and that he will forever receive adoration from the horses (v. 90). The expression *mattas tvaddīptadīdhitih* is syntactically somewhat loose (the unusual cpd *dīpta-dīdhitih* is used about the sun in v. 74 *sūryo dīptadīdhitih*).

24. Cf. v. 105.22 to the Ghatnagar basalt image depicting Revanta and a female devotee in a forest with robbers about to attack. See BANERJEE, *op. cit.*, p. 442, and SHARMA, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-8.

25. The earliest Revanta images have been found in Rājasthān, Uttar Pradesh and Bihār, dating from the Gupta period (5th-6th century). See SHARMA, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-2.

26. *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa*, Śrī Veṅkaṭeśvara Steam Press, Bombay.

27. The printed text reads *uvācātha*.

This Purāṇa also contains one of the first pieces of information concerning the iconographical representation of Revanta. In the *manurūpanirūpana* it is stated:

*atītā manavaḥ kāryā rājalakṣaṇalakṣitaḥ /
prṣṭheṣve sūryavat kāryo revantaś ca tathā prabhuḥ //* 3.70.5²⁸

Again his relationship to the sun and to horses is strongly brought out. He should be represented as the sun (*sūryavat*) and on the back of a horse (*prṣṭheṣve*) but it now also clearly appears that he is counted as one of the Manus (cf. n. 16).

Information about the iconography of Revanta is also to be had from another work of roughly the same period, the *Brhatsaṃhitā*. In the chapter on images, *pratimālakṣaṇādhyāya*, we read:

revanto 'śvārūḍho mṛgayākrīḍādiparivāraḥ 58.56b²⁹

He should be represented mounted on a horse and engaged in hunting sports. This agrees well with the most standardized form of the Revanta images that have been preserved.

As the cult of Revanta developed and spread to many parts of India it became integrated with sun worship. Confirmation of this is to be found e.g. in an informative passage of the *Kālikāpurāṇa* which in its extant version might be of fairly recent origin³⁰. In ch. 85 the ritual duties of a king are enumerated and described and regarding Revanta it is stated:

*saptame 'hni tu rebhantaṃ pūjayet toraṇāntare /
sūryaputraṃ mahābāhuṃ dvibhujam kavacojjvalam //
jvalantaṃ śuklavastreṇa keśān udgrathya vāsasā /
kaśaṃ vāmakare bibhṛad dakṣiṇaṃ tu karaṃ punaḥ //
sa khaḍgaṃ nyasya vāmāyāṃ sitasaindhavaśaṃsthitaṃ /
evaṃvidhaṃ tu rebhantaṃ pratimāyāṃ ghaṭe 'pi vā //
sūryapūjāvidhānena pūjayet toraṇāntare /
pūjayitvā tu rebhantaṃ dviradaṃ turagaṃ tathā //* 46-49

Here Revanta has acquired an independent ritual status and has become dissociated from the myth of Vivasvat and Saṃjñā though many

28. Differing only slightly in wording line b is found in the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* of Hemādri:

prṣṭhaṣṭhaḥ sūryavat kāryo revantaś ca tathā prabhuḥ

29. This verse was translated by Al-Birūnī. See *Al-Birūnī's India*, edited with notes and indices by E. Sachau, vol. 1, repr. New Delhi..., 1964. p. 119. *mṛgayākrīḍādiparivāraḥ* is freely translated as «like a huntsman».

30. Earlier than the 11th century according to P. K. Goḍe in his article *The Date of the Kālikāpurāṇa - Before A.D. 1000*, in «Studies in Indian Literary History», vol. 1, Singhi Jain Series 37, Bombay, 1953, pp. 203-8. But this assumption is arguable as there is evidence to show that the *Kālikāpurāṇa* referred to in the older literature is not our present one which might be the product of the 17th century. See R. C. Hazra, *Studies in the Upa Purāṇas*, vol. 2, Calcutta, 1963 (repr. 1979), pp. 286 ff. The edition used here is *Kālikāpurāṇam*, ed. Śrī Bīṣvanārāyaṇ Śāstrī, The Jaikrishnadas-Krishnadas Prachyavidya Granthamala. Vārāṇasī, 1972.

of his attributes are reminiscent of those in the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*. On the 7th day (in the month of Aśvin) near a gate, Revanta should be worshipped according to sun ritual (*sūryapūjāvidhānena*) in an image or in a pot (*pratimāyāṃ ghaṭe 'pi vā*). He should be represented as sitting on a white horse (*sitasaindhavasamaṣṭhitam*³¹), holding a whip in his left hand and a sword in his right³².

Revanta as a representative of the warrior ideal (*mahābāhum*, *kavacojjvalam*, *khaḍgam*) became in a natural way linked to the *kṣatriya*, kings and war activities. This is clearly born out by the *nirājana* ceremony in which worship of the sun and Revanta play an important part. The *nirājana* took place before troops departed for battle³³.

In some passages in the Purāṇas the main feature in the subsequent development of the figure of Revanta is distinctly foreshadowed. In these passages his equine aspect clearly stands out and he is now looked upon as a physician, benefactor and protector of horses. In some of these texts sections relating to the care and protection of horses are found. Thus the *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa* contains chapters on *aśvacikitsā* (2.46) and *aśvasānti* (2.47). In the latter Revanta plays a significant rôle in a ritual context and is praised in the following words:

*omkārapurvaṃ ca tathā revantāya punaḥ punaḥ /
dvijāti pūjanam karyam mālyamodakacandanaiḥ //
dakṣiṇābhiś ca dharmajña yathāvad anupūrvaśaḥ /
nārīṣu vardhyayet sarvaṃ revantasya niveditam //
evam sampūjito dadhyāt turaṅgamaśatāny api /
balaṃ tejas tathārogyam turaṅgānāṃ ca bhārgava //* 10-12

This is a description of a *pūjā* ritual. When shown veneration Revanta grants hundreds of horses (*turaṅgamaśatāny*) to the worshipper and he confers power, splendour and freedom from disease (*balaṃ tejas tathārogyam*) on the horses. In another verse Revanta is invoked together with some other deities for the protection and welfare of the horses:

*brahmṇaṃ śaṅkaram somam ādityam ca tathā 'śvinau /
revantaṃ uccaiḥśravasaṃ dikpālāṃś ca daśv api //* 2.47.27

31. *saindhava* in the sense of « horse (from Sindh) » is recorded only as a lexicographical word in the dictionaries.

32. In some images he holds the whip in his right hand and reins in his left. See e.g. BANERJEA, *op. cit.*, p. 442.

33. On the *nirājana* see the *Śabdakalpadrūma* s.v. SHARMA, *op. cit.*, p. 29, regards the verses on Revanta found there as an independent piece of information. But in reality the *Śabdakalpadrūma* quotes the passage from the *Kālikāpurāṇa* reproduced above. See also the chapter entitled *nirājanavidhi* in the *Yuktikālpataru* of king Bhoja where Revanta is mentioned in v. 95.

This verse is also found in the *aśvaśānti* section (290.7) of the *Agni-purāṇa* ³⁴. Here Indra's horse Uccaiḥśravas is mentioned and in the *Devībhāgavatapurāṇa* this horse is closely connected with Revanta ³⁵.

In the *Garuḍapurāṇa* ³⁶, in the *hayāyurveda* part, worship of Revanta along with oblation and feeding of Brāhmaṇas are mentioned as protective cures of horses (*rakṣā*):

revantapūjanād dhomād ca dvijabhojanāt / 1.201.6a

In the *Skandapurāṇa* ³⁷ Śiva tells Pārvatī about the importance of obtaining the *darśana* of lord Revanta:

īśvara uvāca //
tato gacchen mahādevi rājabhaṭṭārakam param /
raivantakam sūryaputram aśvārūḍham mahābalaṃ //
saṁsthitaṁ kṣetramadhye tu sāvitryā nairṛte priye /
taṁ dṛṣṭvā mānava devī sarvāpadbhyo vimucyate //
ravivāreṇa saptamyām yas taṁ pūjayate naraḥ /
tasyā 'nvaye 'pi no devī daridrī jāyate naraḥ //
tasmāt sarvaprayatnena taṁ evārādhayen manāk /
nirvighnam kṣetravāsārtham rājā vāśavivṛddhaye // 7,160,1-7

In this passage Revanta's common attributes (*sūryaputram*, *aśvārūḍham*) and connection with sun worship (*ravivāreṇa saptamyām*) are mentioned but above all his auspicious character and redeeming power reign supreme. He delivers man from all afflictions (*mānava... sarvāpadbhyo vimucyate*) and worship of him leads to the increase of horses (*aśvavivṛddhaye*). Towards A.D. 1000 this line of development, in which the primary function of Revanta is that of a guardian of horses, finds its clearest expression in that quite extensive but fairly neglected literature on horse-lore called *aśvaśāstra* ³⁸.

34. *Agnipurāṇa*, Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series 41, 1957.

35. *Devībhāgavatapurāṇa* 6.17-19 offers an interesting parallel to the story of Viśvasvat and Saṁjñā. Lakṣmī beholds Revanta riding on Uccaiḥśravas and is dazzled by the sight of him. Viṣṇu becomes enraged and she is transformed into a mare. The subsequent cause of events is modelled fairly closely on that of the old myth. See O'FLAHERTY, *Women, Androgynes and Other Mythical Beasts*, p. 218.

36. *Garuḍapurāṇa*, Kāśī Sanskrit Series 165, Vārāṇasī, 1964.

37. *Śrī Skandamahāpurāṇam*, vol. III, ed. Nag Sharan Singh, Delhi, 1982.

38. The majority of works relating to *aśvaśāstra* still remain unedited. Extracting information from the *New Catalogus Catalogorum*, E. D. KULKARNI, in his edition of *Sālihotra of Bhoja*, in « Sources of Indo-Aryan Lexicography », 11, Poona, 1953, pp. XV-XVI, mentions more than forty different texts. An excellent survey and analysis of the major ones are to be found in A.-M. BLONDEAU, *Matériaux pour l'étude de l'hippologie et de l'hippiatrie tibétaine*, in « Hautes-Études orientales », II, Genève-Paris, 1972, pp. 12-48. For some points of chronology see also P. K. GODE, *Date of the Aśvacikitsita of Nakula - Before A.D. 1000*, in « Studies in Indian Literary History », vol. 2. Singhi Jain Series 38, Bombay, 1954, pp. 161-68. The roots of the science of *aśvaśāstra* can be traced to the *ayurveda* literature. Principle works are:

In the *Yuktikalpataru*³⁹ of king Bhoja in the *hayartucaryā* Revanta is mentioned in the following way:

asambhave hi duṣṭāśvaṃ vāhayed iti cet tadā //
tilaṃ sakāncanaṃ dadyāl lavaṇaṃ vā guḍānvitam /
revantaṃ pūjayet vāpi nijaṃ nirmānthaṃ tadā //
yāt tāmrapalaṃ vāpi abhāve sarvakarmaṇaḥ // 55b-56

In the preceding verses the characteristics of a good horse have been discussed and here it is stated that in the absence (*asambhave*) of such a horse one has to avail oneself of a bad one (*duṣṭāśvaṃ vāhayed*). But in order to improve upon matters various devices should be resorted to. One should e.g. feed the horse sesame seeds mixed with grains of gold and salt mixed with molasses and one should worship Revanta (*revantaṃ pūjayet*). A particular eloquent testimony to Revanta as a divine master of horses is afforded by two passages in the *Aśvaśāstra*⁴⁰ which is attributed to Nakula. In the first passage, a *stotra*, Revanta emerges as the patron saint of the horses *par excellence*:

atha raivatastotram

nārada uvāca —

- (1) *raivataḥ* (2) *pārthivo* (3) *vīro* (4) *māṭṛkolāhalo* (5) *'runaḥ* /
 (6) *pañcagrīvo* (7) *'śvapuruṣaḥ* (8) *piṇḍakī* (9) *hayavāhakaḥ* // 1
 (10) *sūryaputro* (11) *mahāsvāmī* (12) *chāyāhṛdayanandanaḥ* /
 (13) *nārādānandakārī ca* (14) *hṛdayajño* (15) *raṇapriyah* // 2
 (16) *bhāsvān* (17) *ratnāvatībhartā* (18) *nirbhayo* (19) *bhayavighnaḥ* /
 (20) *bhūteśas* (21) *tarjano* (22) *bhadro* (23) *bhūteśo*
 (24) *bhaktavatsalaḥ* // 3

1. *Aśvāyurveda* attr. to Śālihotra, the legendary expounder of horse-lore (c. 300-700).

2. Śālihotra of Vajāha (c. 700-1000).

3. *Aśvacikitsita* } both attr. to Nakula, the fourth of the Pāṇḍava brothers

4. *Aśvaśāstra* } and successor to Śālihotra (before 1000).

5. Śālihotra of king Bhoja of Dhārā (c. 1050).

6. *Aśvavaidyaka* of Jayadatta (c. 1000-1300).

To these may be added the *Yuktikalpataru*, an anthology of verses compiled by king Bhoja, which contains an *aśvayukti* section (chs 93-98). The Tibetan translation of the *Aśvāyurveda* of Śālihotra seems to represent the oldest *aśvaśāstra* text hitherto known (BLONDEAU, *op. cit.*, p. 43). The *New Catalogus Catalogorum*, vol. 1, ed. by V. Raghavan, 2nd rev. ed., Madras, 1968, pp. 436-37, erroneously regards the two works attr. to Nakula as one and the same text appearing under two different names (a mistake repeated by KULKARNI, *loc. op. cit.*).

39. *Yuktikalpataru* by king Bhoja, ed. by Iśvara Chandra Śāstrī, Calcutta, 1917.

40. *Aśvaśāstra* by Nakula, ed. by S. Gopalan in Tanjore Saraswati Mahal Series no. 56, Tanjore, 1952. The edition is based on a unique illustrated MS.

(25) *ārogyasmarāṇo* (26) *vaidyaḥ* (27) *sarvarakṣākarah* (28) *śivaḥ* /
yaḥ kaścīd iti nāmāni aṣṭāviṃśatisaṃkhyayā // 4
aruṇodayavelāyām nidrāyāḥ susamāhitāḥ /
tasyāśvānām na tu bhayaṃ doṣo bhūtair upadravaḥ // 5
sahavittarddhivibhavair yaśobhir abhivardhate /
anyaḥ ko 'pi paṭhed bhaktiā vāmchitam tasya sidhyati // 6
iti raivatāstotram p. 7

This *stotra* consists of 28 names of Revanta to be recited at dawn (*aruṇodayavelāyām*) in order to ward off evil influences on the horses (*aśvānām na tu bhayaṃ doṣo bhūtair upadravaḥ*). This list of names merits careful attention as it sums up the various attributes and qualities ascribed to Revanta and also includes some hitherto unrecorded expressions and compounds. The interpretation of some of these however, eludes our present state of knowledge. 28 names are given but in reality two of them, 20 and 23, are identical (*bhūteśa*). Some of these names express traditional notions associated with Revanta like the son of the sun (*sūryaputra*), the horse-man (*aśvapuruṣa*), he who rides a horse (*aśvavāhaka*) and he who is fond of battle (*raṇapriya*). As in some earlier texts he is also the bestower of health (*vaidya*, *ārogyasmarāṇa*), the word *ārogya* often occurring in this context (cf. *Mārkaṇḍeyap.* 105.23a and *Viṣṇudharmottarap.* 2.47.12b). There is a reference to his mother Chāyā (*chāyāhrdayanandana*), Saṃjñā being sometimes confused with her double, her shadow. Some terms express a markedly devotional attitude (*bhaktavatsala*, *śiva*). Many expressions like *aruṇa*, *tarjana*, *piṇḍakī*, *māṭṛkolāhala*, *pañcagrīva* (« the five-necked one ») seem difficult to interpret satisfactorily at the moment. Revanta is here also credited with a spouse, Ratnāvatī by name (*ratnāvatībhartā*), a fact which seems to be unknown to the Purāṇas. In these texts as well as in the iconography he appears without any female consorts⁴¹.

The other passage from the *Aśvaśāstra* describes a ritual to be performed in the morning in order to achieve an auspicious ride (*vāhanavidhi*):

raṅgabhumau raivatakaṃ prasiddhaṃ sthāpayet tataḥ //
puṣpair dhūpaiḥ pradīpaiś ca candanaiḥ pāyasais tathā /
pakvānnaiḥ pañcagavyaiś ca prātaḥ śuciḥ suvāsasāḥ //
raktāmbaradharo bhūtvā raktapuṣpadharas tathā /
om namo raivatāya aśvahrdayāya hrīm kṛīm om namaḥ
svetāya saumyarūpāya imam aśvaṃ sādahaya sādahaya bandhaya
vaśyaṃ
kuru kuru mahāvīryāya raivatāya namaḥ /

41. An exception to this is an 18th century painting from Tanjore which shows Revanta seated on a horse drinking together with a woman (see SHARMA, *op. cit.*, p. 63, fig. 46). However, this work of art dates from a later period and is unique in that it also represents Revanta as having four arms instead of two contrary to other iconographical and textual evidence (*dvibhuja* is a common attribute in the texts).

*etan mantraṃ japet prājño hayasya dakṣiṇe śrutau /
ekaviṃśatīvāraṃ ca tataḥ paryānayed dhayam //* p. 122

The performer should be pure in mind and wear a red garment. An image of Revanta should be placed on the *raṅgabhūmi* and offerings of various kinds should be made. A *bījamantra* addressed to Revanta, the inmost self of the horses (*aśvahṛdayāya*), should be recited 21 times into the right ear of the horse in order to gain control of it.

Revanta is rarely referred to in belletristic literature but there are some instances from later times and significantly they mostly stem from Western India, a region where the cult of Revanta came to flourish to a particularly high degree ⁴².

It has not been possible here to include material written in Middle-Indian languages but attention may be drawn to the Prakrit-Hindī dictionary *Pāiasaddamahāṇṇavo* ⁴³. There Revanta is briefly characterized as « *sūrya kā ek putra dev viśeṣ* » (« a son of the sun, a certain god »). When looking at the Prakrit quotation given by the dictionary, however, it is the equine aspect of Revanta that clearly stands out:

revaṇta tanubhavā iva assakisorā sulakkhaṇiṇo
« Young ones of horses, possessing auspicious marks, are as if sprung from the body of Revanta ».

Revanta in Western and Central India

In this part of our study we are mainly concerned with material partly of a historical and partly of a lexicographical nature. There is quite ample evidence from Deccan, Gujarāt and Rājasthān to indicate that towards 1000 A.D. and during the following centuries the historical importance of Revanta reached its maximum height in those very areas. Above all two factors seem to have contributed to this development, namely, the revival of sun worship and especially the increasing military and economical importance of the horse. The connection between the sun and the horse is an old one, present already in the early Vedic hymns, and has since long been particularly characteristic of the western

42. Two works provenating from this region are mentioned by SHARMA, *op. cit.*, p. 29: *Prthivīrājaviṇaya* of Jayānaka and *Kuvalayakathāmālā* of Udyotanasūri. To judge from Sharma's translation of the relevant passage in the latter work it seems to be a quotation from the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* (vv. 22-23).

43. *Pāiasaddamahāṇṇavo*, ed. by Hargovind Das T. Sheth in Prakrit Texts Series, vol. VII, Vārāṇasi, 1963.

parts of India⁴⁴. The solar and equestrian qualities of Revanta shed light on his historic rôle against this background.

Having mostly received support from merchants and scholars during the Gupta period sun worship⁴⁵ gained a new impetus from the 8th century onwards, partly through Iranian influence, and came to flourish under royal patronage in the western and central parts of India. Numerous grants made by kings to important sun temples testify to this and sometimes Indian sun worship merged with Iranian fire cult as can be seen from the *agnikuṇḍa* of many inscriptions. Śaivism also came to be an important force but in many instances sun worship continued to coexist along with it. Of old Lāṭa (southern Gujarāt) was a prominent place of sun worship and silk weavers from that area introduced it to Central India. The sun cult was particularly cultivated by rulers in Gujarāt and Rājasthān. The early Gurjaras were hereditary sun worshippers and several Cālukyas, Cauhāns and Rājputs patronized sun worship. Also the Kalachuris of Ratanpur (12th-13th c.) gave strong support to sun worship and may have had it as a hereditary family cult. The cult of Revanta which had become integrated with that of the sun could naturally benefit from the wave of sun worship that swept over large parts of India during so many centuries.

Of even greater significance for an understanding of the connection between Revanta and Western India is the new rôle that the horse came to assume from about 800 A.D. onwards. The Turkish invasions brought about a change in military tactics with troops mounted on horses. In many Hindu states counter-measures were taken with large imports of horses as a consequence. The horse trade with Arabia and Persia flourished and seems to have reached a peak during the 12th-14th c.⁴⁶ The unsuitable climate of India made it necessary to import frequently huge

44. L. DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN, *Dynasties et Histoire de l'Inde depuis Kanishka jusqu'aux invasions musulmanes*, in « Histoire du Monde », T. 6, 2, Paris, 1935, p. 351, makes the observation that: « Le culte combiné du soleil et du cheval reste une caractéristique de tout l'Ouest: "Aujourd'hui encore tout rajpoute porte une amulette à l'image du cheval et du soleil..." » (J. Malcolm cité J.R.A.S., 1899, 543) ».

45. A well-documented study on the subject is V. C. SRIVASTAVA, *Sun-Worship in Ancient India*, Allahabad, 1972. Particularly valuable are pp. 366-91 surveying the epigraphical material. See also L. DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN, *op. cit.*, pp. 348-53.

46. In some articles P. K. GODE has dealt with various aspects of Indian horse trade: *History of Canaka (gram) as Food for Horses between c. A.D. 800 and 1870 together with some Notes on the Import of Foreign Horses into India in Ancient and Medieval Times*, in « Studies in Indian Cultural History », vol. 1 (Vishveshwaranand Indological Publications 9), Hoshiarpur, 1961, pp. 218-32; *Some References to Persian Horses in Indian Literature*, in « The Poona Orientalist », vol. 11 (1946), pp. 1-17; *Some Distinctive Names of Horses recorded by Hemacandra in his Abhidānacintāmaṇi, by Someśvara in his Mānasollāsa and by Jayadatta in his Aśvavaidyaka - between A.D. 1000 and 1200*, in « Studies in Indian Literary History », vol. 3, Poona, 1956, pp. 172-81.

quantities of animals⁴⁷. Imports of foreign horses are mentioned in earlier Sanskrit texts, the Persian horse having a long-standing reputation as being of an exceptionally high quality⁴⁸. Now they continued on an unprecedented scale with Kāyal, situated near the mouth of the Tāmraparṇī river, as a major port. There an Arabic trading centre had been set up by Maliku-l-Islām Jamalu-d-dīn, the ruler of Kīš, towards the close of the 13th century⁴⁹. From this period of intensive horse-trade with Arabia and Persia we have an observant contemporary eyewitness in Marco Polo who visited India in c. 1293. In his book of travels it is said about Kāyal:

« Cail⁵⁰ è una nobile e grande città. Ed appartiene ad Asciar, il più anziano dei cinque re che sono fratelli tra loro. E dovete sapere che a questa città fanno porto tutte le navi che vengono di ponente — da Cormosa⁵¹, da Chisi⁵², da Aden e dalle varie parti di Arabia — cariche di mercanzie e di cavalli. I mercatanti fanno porto a questa città, perché essa è ottimamente situata ed è un mercato ottimo per commerciare. Poiché deve aggiungersi che da molti paesi ci vengono in gran numero i mercatanti per acquisto di merci, di cavalli e di altro »⁵³.

When talking about Tana (Thāna), a prominent port of trade at some distance from Bombay, Marco Polo stresses the importance of import of foreign horses for all of India:

47. More than 10,000 horses are said to have been imported every year. See GODE, *History of Canaka...*, p. 231. Cf. also N. SASTRI, *A History of South India*, Madras, 1955, p. 212.

48. On the *pārasika* (the Persian horse) see GODE, *Some References to Persian Horses...*, and *History of Canaka...*, pp. 225-26. *The Amarakoṣa* (*Amarakoṣa with the Unpublished South Indian Commentaries Amarapadavivṛti of Liṅgayasūrin, Amara-padapārijāta of Mallinātha and Amarapadavivarāṇa of Appayārya*). Critically ed. with Introduction by A. A. Ramanathan, vols. 1-2, in *The Adyar Library Series* 101, Madras, 1971-78) mentions four kinds of foreign horses:

vānāyujāḥ pārasikāḥ kāmbojā bāhlikā hayāḥ

2.8.45

The juxtaposition of these four names of foreign horses recurs frequently in later literature. The exact identity of the horse-breeding region called *vānayu* is not clear. *vānāyujā* horses are mentioned already in the *Arthashastra* as belonging to the best ones: *uttamāḥ kāmbojakasaindhavāraṭṭajavānāyujāḥ*. Some commentators and to some extent also Gode assume that both *vānāyujā* and *pārasika* refer to horses of Persian origin (see GODE, *Some References to Persian Horses...*, pp. 3-6). This must however remain an unsettled question as both these terms often occur together and no particulars about them are given. Cf. also the comm. Mallinātha who expressly states about these names « *bhinnadeśatvād bhinnārthakāḥ* ».

49. Cf. GODE, *Some Distinctive Names of Horses...*, pp. 179-80.

50. Cail = Kāyal (Tamil « backwater », « lagoon »). See also P. PELLLOT, *Notes on Marco Polo*, vol. 1, Paris, 1959, p. 130.

51. Cormosa = the Persian island of Hormuz, the extremely important trading-place in ancient times.

52. Chisi = Kīš, the island in the Persian Gulf. See also PELLLOT, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

53. *Il libro di Messer Marco Polo Cittadino di Venezia detto Milione dove si raccontano Le Meraviglie del Mondo*. Ricostruito criticamente e per la prima volta integralmente tradotto in lingua italiana da L. F. Benedetto, Milano-Roma, 1932, p. 337.

« Come vi ho raccontato più sopra, si fa un gran commercio di cavalli per tutta l'India. I mercatanti ve ne portano a vendere in quantità grande, cosicché sono poche le navi che vanno in India senza portare cavalli »⁵⁴.

The new and important rôle that came to be assigned to the horse during this period can be clearly seen when comparing the colour-based classification of horses that is found in *śvaśāstra* works written around 1000 A.D. to the one occurring in some texts originating from Western and Central India only one to two centuries later. The earlier texts distinguish only between a limited number of different kinds of horses and make use of a simple terminology in Sanskrit (*kṛṣṇa*, *pīta* etc.). Thus a five-fold division is given in the *Śvaśāstra*:

kathitam tu vayoññānam varṇānām lakṣaṇam śṛṇu // 1
śvetaḥ śoṇaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ harito varṇā bhavanti catvāraḥ /
citrās tathā pañcamakas tv ete varṇaprakārāḥ pañcaiva // 2
p. 91

The *Śvacikitsita*⁵⁵, attributed to Nakula contains a seven-fold one:
varṇāḥ sapta bhavantiha sarveṣām vājinām dhruvam /
tān ahaṁ kīrtayiṣyāmi bhedair jātām anekadhā //
sito raktas tathā pītaḥ sārāṅgaḥ piṅga eva ca /
nīlaḥ kṛṣṇo 'tha sarveṣām śvetaḥ śreṣṭhatamaḥ smṛtaḥ // 3.1-2

In sharp contrast to this is the long list of names of horses and their colour characteristics that occurs in the famous dictionary of synonyms called *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi*⁵⁶ (*tiryakkāṇḍa*) written in Gujarāt by the Jaina polymath Hemacandra (1088-1172):

site tu karkakhokāhau khoṅgāhaḥ śvetapiṅgale //
piyūṣavarṇe serāhaḥ pīte tu hariyo hayaḥ /
kṛṣṇavarṇe tu khuṅgāhaḥ kriyāho lohito hayaḥ //
ānīlas tu nīlako 'tha triyūhaḥ kapilo hayaḥ /
vollāhaḥ tv ayam eva syāt pāṇḍukesara vāladhiḥ //
urāhas tu manāk pāṇḍuḥ kṛṣṇajaṅgho bhaved yadi /
sūrūhako gardabhābho vorukhānas tu paṭalaḥ //
kulāhas tu manāk pītaḥ kṛṣṇas syād yadi jānuni /
ukanāhaḥ pītaraktacchāyaḥ sa eva tu kvacid //
kṛṣṇaraktacchaviḥ proktaḥ śoṇaḥ kokanadacchaviḥ /
harikaḥ pītaharitacchāyaḥ sa eva hālakaḥ //
paṅgulaḥ sitakācābho halāhaś citrato hayaḥ /
303b-309a

The majority of these twenty names are clearly non-sanskritic, a fact recognized by Hemacandra himself who in his *ṭīkā* remarks that they are mostly *deśī* words (*deśīprāyāḥ*):

54. *Ibid.*, p. 348.

55. Ed. by Umeścandra Gupta, Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1887.

56. Ed. by Hargovind Sāstrī with the Maṇiprabhā Hindī Commentary, Vidyābhavan Sanskrit Series 109, Vārāṇasī, 1964.

« *khoṅgāhādayaḥ śabdā deśiprāyāḥ / vyutpattis tv eṣāṃ varṇanu-pūrvī niścayārtham* »⁵⁷.

Also another work from the same period, the *Mānasollāsa*, written by the Cālukya king Someśvara III ruling in Deccan 1227-1232 includes a similar list of names of horses. Some of these are common both to the *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi* and the *Mānasollāsa* and are also included in the third list of names to be found in the *aśvaśāstra* text *Aśvavaidyaka* of Jayadatta. Jayadatta, being perhaps somewhat later in time than Hemacandra, seems to be even more conscious than the latter about the fact that by this time the old terminology of horses had become obsolete and replaced by a new one. Jayadatta expressly states:

*cakravākādibhir varṇaiḥ śālihotrādibhiḥ smṛtaiḥ /
pāṭalādyaiś ca lokasya vyavahāro na sāmpratam //* 98⁵⁸

Al these pieces of evidence indicate the importance and the extent of horse-trade in the western and central parts of India during the 11th-13th century and several of the words recorded by the three authors mentioned above may be of Arabic, Persian and Turkish origin⁵⁹. Also the large number of words for horses found in texts written in Western India, in Sanskrit, Gujarātī and Rājasthānī, testify to this. Among these we find *aśva* (falling into disuse), *haya* (particularly favoured by the Jains), *tura(n)ga(ma)*, *turī*, *vājī*, *ghoḍo/ghoṛā* (>Skt *ghoṭaka*) and the typical Guj. word *kekāṇa*⁶⁰.

It is against the background outlined above we have to understand the appearance of Revanta in inscriptions commencing in the 11th century. Epigraphs containing references to Revanta are not numerous and some of them have not been properly edited. These inscriptions can be divided into two groups according to the function of Revanta in them: a) inscriptions in which Revanta constitutes a part of the poetical imagery, and b) inscriptions which refer to the cult of Revanta.

57. Quoted from GODE, *Some Distinctive Names of Horses...*, p. 173.

58. Quoted from *ibid.*, p. 179.

59. Similarities between many of the names in Hemacandra's list and names for horses in Turkish dialects have been pointed out by H. BERGER, *Türkische Pferdewörter bei einem Sanskrit-Lexikographen?*, in « Indo-Iranian Journal », vol. 10, pp. 177-80. These etymologies seem preferable to the Mongolian ones suggested by M. MAYRHOFER, *Mongolische Pferdewörter bei einem Sanskrit-Lexikographen?*, in « Paideuma », vol. 7 (1960), pp. 96-8, in view of both the linguistic data themselves and the possibilities of trading contact between Western India and neighbouring areas during the period in question.

60. For an example of *kekāṇa* see the *Nalarāyadavadantīcarita*, a Jaina version of the well-known story of Nala and Damayanti in Old Gujarātī, ed. and transl. by E. Bender, Philadelphia, 1951: *kari kekāṇa karaha koṭhāra* (122d). *Kekāṇa* has not been recorded in Sanskrit dictionaries but it occurs in some texts relating to horse-lore: *Aśvacikitsita*, *Yuktikalpataru*, *Mānasollāsa*. See e.g. *Yuktikalpataru* v. 26b (p. 182)) where *kekāṇa* is enumerated among horses of the middle type: *gojikāṇās ca kekāṇāḥ prauḍhāhārās ca madhyamāḥ*

kekāṇa is probably a *deśi* word but the etymology proposed by M. B. BELSARE, *A Gujarātī-English Etymological Dictionary*, repr. New Delhi, 1981 (s.v.), is untenable: *kekāṇa* < Guj. *khōkhār*, *khūkhārvū* (« to neigh »).

a) In this group Revanta is only briefly referred to acting as an object of comparison to kings and feudatories. As he typifies royal and martial qualities as strength, valour and prowess he is well suited for this purpose. The sole function ascribed to him here is that of a master of horses and he is therefore easily included in the imagery connected with mounted troops. Certain stock-phrases recur like *turagarevanta* («a Revanta as far as horses are concerned») and (*viṣama*)*hayārūḍhārevanta* («a Revanta mounted on [unruly] horses»).

The Śilāhāra grant inscription (Western India) in Sanskrit of A.D. 1058⁶¹ contains the phrase *turaga-Révanta* (line 30). In the same inscription Mārasimha is compared to Revanta and Vatsarāja:

Révantō Vatsarājō vara-turaga-chay-ārūḍha-rēkhā-viśuddhau
(line 23 f.)

The interpretation of the cpd is not wholly clear, *rēkhā* indicating superiority «the foremost» (lit. «a streak»)⁶². From the Kalachuris of Madhya Pradesh (Chattisgarh Dt) originates the Pujāripāli stone inscription of king Gopāladeva c. 1150⁶³. In v. 41 the king is compared to Kāma in beauty, to Śūdraka in bravery appearing in every ways mounted on a horse like Revanta:

kaṃdarppa iva rūpeṇa gopālaḥ sau(śau)ryaśūdrakaḥ /
sthāne sthāne hayārūḍho revanta iva dṛśyate //

More inscriptions are preserved in the Kāṇṇada language. The stone tablet inscription of 1153, found at Ablūr, dates from the reign of the Western Cālukya king Taila III⁶⁴. Here the kings feudatory Mahāsāman-tādhipati is compared to Revanta with regard to horses: *turaya-Révanta* (line 10)⁶⁵. Cf. the similar expression in the Śilāhāra inscription.

The expressions (*prauḍha*)*rekhārevanta* and *surekhārevanta* recur in several Kāṇṇada inscriptions e.g. in the Harihar epigraph of K. 893 (1141-42 A.D.)⁶⁶ the interpretation of which is not clear:

grahaṇa-nirgata-prêraṇa-lagna-stâ(sthâ)pan-ôllaḷita-sâdi-sû(chanu?)-
sû(śu)kaḷa-sapti-saṃkuḷa-grâhita-parichadhârâ-prapamcha-samcha-
raṇa-chaturtara-surêkhâ-Révantanurṃ

Two other inscriptions are much less stereotype and show more imagination. One is dated Śaka 999 (1077 A.D.) and comes from Hulgur⁶⁷.

61. EI, vol. 5, p. 234, n. 9, and p. 236, n. 1.

62. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 236, n. 4.

63. CII, vol. 4, pp. 588-94.

64. EI, vol. 5, p. 234, n. 9, and p. 236, n. 1.

65. The form *turaya* is not recorded in Sanskrit dictionaries.

66. EI, vol. 5, p. 236, n. 1. Original source: J. FLEET, *Pali Sanskrit and Old Canarese Inscriptions from the Bombay Presidency and Part of the Madras Presidency*, London, 1898, No. 125.

67. EI, vol. 16, p. 330.

There it is stated that the feudatory (*mahāsāmanta*) Jayakesiyarasa had obtained the *pañcamahāśabda* ⁶⁸ and was like a Revanta of the Kali age:

Svasti samadhigāta-parīcha-mahā-sa(śa)bda-mahāsāmantaṁ
Kali-yuga-Rēva(n)ta(m) line 11

The comparison implies the valour and pre-eminence of Jayakesiyarasa.

The other inscription like the preceding one, dates from the time of Vikramāditya VI (A.D. 1125) and is engraved on a stone near a temple in Mallikārjuna at Kumbapur ⁶⁹. It reads:

Ativishama-rasa-turaṅgama-patiyaṁ Rēvaṁtan=arīṭ=ir=ēṇalu sa-
kaḷa-kshiti poḷutt-ire sēnāpati-tīlakaṁ Sīṁha-daṇḍanāthane ballaṁ
 v. 49

Here Revanta is a part of an aesthetic comparison of some originality. It is told that the military commander (*daṇḍanāyaka*) ⁷⁰ Sīṁha, the ornament of generals, was praised by the whole world when like a Revanta he rode his horse on the different *rasas* which are difficult to master.

There are also references to Revanta in some Telugu inscriptions from the period of the Kākatīyās. The Gaṅgāvaram ⁷¹ and Aluvālapāḍu ⁷² inscriptions (Nellū Dt) date from 1255 and 1272 respectively during the reigns of Gaṇapatideva and Tripurāri Deva Mahārāja, a subordinate of king Gaṇapati's daughter Rudrāmbā (royal name Rudradeva). The two relevant passages occur in the conventional eulogies of Gaṇapatideva and Rudradeva that open the inscriptions and are identical in wording:

ati viśamahayārūḍha
prauḍharekhā rēvanta lines 5b-6a and 8b-10a resp.

This should, however, probably not be taken as evidence of a real Revanta cult in Āndhra Pradesh during the period in question. The phrase is extremely stereotype and has exact correspondences in several Kaṇnada inscriptions of the preceding centuries. It should be regarded as a formal, conventional cliché belonging to the panegyric courtly style characteristic of the time.

b) There are only a small number of references to Revanta images and temples. Two such epigraphs from the 12th century belong to the

68. This expression refers to the five designations beginning with *mahā*- enjoyed by feudatories. See D. C. SIRCAR, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, Delhi, 1966, p. 230.

69. EI, vol. 13, p. 306.

70. On this term see SIRCAR, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-1.

71. *Selected South Indian Inscriptions*, Gen. ed. V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar. *Selected Telugu Inscriptions*, ed. by N. Venkata Rao, University of Madras, 1952, pp. 255-57.

72. *Ibid.*, pp. 258-61.

Kalachuris of Madhya Pradesh where, as noted earlier, the sun cult exercised great influence.

The Akaltarā stone inscription from Koṭgaḍh, Bilaspur Dt, of Ratnadeva II is not dated but must be earlier than c. 1140⁷³. The inscription traces the origin of the Kalachuri dynasty back to the Moon (vv. 1-10) and then proceeds to give the lineage of Vallabharāja, a feudatory of king Ratnadeva II. This Vallabharāja is extolled in a series of hyperboles and among the excellent qualities ascribed to him is that of horse-riding (*turaṅgāṇaṃ vāhe* v. 16). In vv. 21-22 it is stated that:

*tenedam ābharaṇam āracitaṃ pṛthivyāḥ
pṛthvipater nniṣapater mmahiṣṭi matvā /
revantamandiramiṣān nayanopabhogyam
bha(ktyo)pacāracature(ṇa) yaśodhanena //
(sa) pṛtāśva (sūnu)bhavanottamacitrakarmmānirmmaṇataḥ
suviśadāṃ kiratā ca kīrttiṃ /
tenādhunā saha yaśodhanam ānilokair
vvismāpitaḥ sa bhagavān api viśvakarmṃ //*

Thus Vallabharāja is said to have provided the earth, his spouse, with an extraordinary ornament in guise of a Revanta temple (*revanta-mandiramiṣāt*). Through the construction of this excellent temple of the son (Revanta) of the seven-horsed one (the sun — *saptāśvasūnubhavana*) he is also said to have caused the wonder of Viśvakarman who, as is known, is the father-in-law of the sun.

The other inscription which is from Ratanpur, the capital of the Kalachuris (Bilaspur Dt), belongs to the reign of Pṛthvideva II and is dated K. 910 (A.D. 1158-59)⁷⁴. The construction of the first half of this inscription is similar to that of the preceding one. In v. 29 the same Vallabharāja, knowing his religious duties (*sarvvadharmavidhiṇena*), is credited with a number of donations to several towns and villages. About Vikarṇapura⁷⁵ it is reported that:

*vikarṇapuravā(bā)hyālyāṃ vipulajalapūrṇaṃ śa(sa)rovaram saprā-
kāṛānekaprāsādamaṭhopetaṃ ārāmodyānaṃ ca tathā revantamūrṭti
devakulaṃ tathā*

Among the things he caused to be constructed on the outskirts (*bāhyālyāṃ*⁷⁶) of this town were a tank, a pleasure-grove and a temple containing an image of Revanta (*revantamūrṭti devakulam*).

The most eloquent expression of Revanta's religious importance can be seen in an inscription from Gujarāt which opens with the words *om namaḥ śrīrevaṃtāya*. The atmosphere of war prevails in this inscription

73. CII, vol. 4, pp. 430-36.

74. *Ibid.*, pp. 495-501.

75. Probably mod. Koṭgaḍh.

76. This word *bāhyāli* is not recorded in the Sanskrit dictionaries.

and the connection with Revanta, the embodiment of the warrior ideal, conforms well with it. The epigraph is dated Monday April the 17th 1290 (S. 1346) and belongs to the reign of the Čālukya king Śāraṅgadeva ruling at Anahillapātaka, the ancient capital of Gujārāt⁷⁷. We are informed that Vāmanasthālī (mod. Vanthali) Kāthiāvār, the place where the inscription was found, at that time had been given as a fief (*pratipatti*) to the feudatory (Mahāmaṇḍaleśvara) Vijayānanda, the son of Kṣhemānanda⁷⁸. The inscription, consisting of seven ślokaḥ, composed by a certain Mādhava (v. 7) is here reproduced *in extenso*:

om namaḥ śrīrevamṭāya / saṃvata 1346 varṣe vaiśākha vadi 6 some
mahārājādhirājasāraṅgadevakalyāṇavijayirājye śrīvāmanasthalyām
mahāmaṇḍaleśvaraśrīvijayānandaudevapratipattau //
śrīrāṣṭrakūṭānvayamaulir alaṃ śrīmallaṇāmājani śauryasiṃdhuḥ //
tasyātmajaḥ śrīharipālanāmā dhanyo mahāsādhaniḥ babhūva // 1
śṛṅgārabhaṃgisubhagaḥ śubhagānavicivācālakaṃṭhakuharā muhur
āttaviṇāḥ /
gāyaṃti...girā nagarājaśṛṅgam āruhya guhyakacakoraḍṣo yaśo
'sya // 2
vīraḥ śrīvijayānandaḥ kṣemānandasya naṃdanaḥ /
vīgrahītumaṇā bhānuḥ bhūbhṛtpallim agātkila // 3
nṛpakāryāhṛtas tatra haripālaḥ kṛpālayaḥ /
kedāraputraṃ piśunair hanyamānam udaikṣata // 4
taiḥ samaṇ tanvas tasya samīkam āsavo yayuḥ /
tanmūrtyuktaṃ tadbhṛtā raṇastambhaṃ idaṃ vyadhāt // 5
sahasradhāmnas tanujanmanaḥ śrīrevamṭanāmnaḥ purato navīnaḥ /
acikaran maṇḍapam adviṭīyam aho mahāsādhaniḥ sa eṣaḥ // 6
śrīnuṃjīgasutaḥ śrīmaccamatkārapuradvijah /
saptaślokiṃ imāṃ cakre mādhave viśvamādhavaḥ // 7
likhitam idaṃ maṃha° arisimhasūta maṃha° rāulena /
utkarṇi sūtra° sāmtalasutasūtra° vīrākeṇa

This Vijayānanda set out in warfare against Bhānu (*vīgrahītumaṇā bhānuḥ bhūbhṛtpallim agāt*). In the ensuing battle his commander-in-chief (*mahāsādhaniḥ*⁷⁹), Haripāla by name, saw Kedāraputra being killed by the enemies (*kedāraputraṃ piśunair hanyamānam udaikṣata*).

77. Transcribed in D. B. DISKALKAR, *An Incomplete Inscription in the Rajkot Museum*, in « Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute », vol. 5, p. 174, n. See also EI, vol. 20, Appendix-Inscriptions of Northern India no. 624, and H. D. SANKALTA, *The Archaeology of Gujarat (including Kathiawar)*, Bombay, 1941, p. 214, and Appendix no. 245. For other inscriptions of king Śāraṅgadeva see DISKALKAR, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-79, and *id.*, *Some Unpublished Inscriptions of the Chaulukyas of Gujārāt*, in « The Poona Orientalist », vol. 3 (1938), esp. pp. 69-73.

78. Further and more detailed information about Vijayānanda and his family can be found in the undated inscription of Śāraṅgadeva which was also discovered at Vanthali. See DISKALKAR, *An Incomplete Inscription...*, v. 31a, of this inscription and v. 3a of our inscription are identical.

79. On the title *mahāsādhaniḥ* see SIRCAR, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

In an attempt to rescue him his own life was lost as well as Kedāra-putras (*taiḥ samaṃ tanvas tasya samīkam asavo yayuh*). Haripāla was succeeded by his brother as *mahāsāadhanika*. The brother erected a battle pillar (*raṇastambha*) with the image of Revanta (*tanmūrtiyuktam*) in memory of Haripāla. It is also told that:

« This new *mahāsāadhanika* caused an incomparable *maṇḍapa* to be built in honour of him who bears the name of the glorious Revanta, the son of the thousand-rayed one (the sun) ». v. 6

Mention may also be made of a short inscription in Rājasthānī engraved on the pedestal of a yellow stone image of Revanta from the Jaisalmer region. It reads as follows:

saṃvat 1682 varṣe āsā(ṣā)dha vadi 5 ravau mahārājādhirāja // 1
mahārājarāula śrīkalyāṇadāsajī vijaya rāje mūrtti // 2
*śrī reba(vaṃ)ta rī thāpanā kīdhī che śrīr astu kalyāṇam astu // 3*⁸⁰

We are told that this image of the glorious Revanta (*mūrtti śrī reba[vaṃ]ta rī*) was installed (*thāpanā kīdhī che*) during the victorious reign of Mahārāja Rāula Śrīkalyāṇadāsajī in 1625 (S. 1682).

In the foregoing pages an attempt has been made to indicate some historical reasons (sun worship, horse trade and feudalism) for Revanta making his appearance so late in epigraphy as compared to art and literature where he is attested to already in the Gupta period⁸¹.

The particular ties that came to exist between Revanta and Western India have persisted till the present day. This can be evidenced from comparing the information on him to be found in the voluminous lexicographical works *Hinḍīśabdasaṅgraha*⁸² and *Rājasthānīśabdakoṣa*⁸³. The former one, a dictionary of the hindī language, has a quite short entry on Revanta simply stating that he is the son of the sun, the lord of the *guhyakas* and that he was born from a mare, his equine qualities not being focused upon at all:

« *revanta* — *saṃjñā puṃ° (saṃ°) sūrya ke putra jo guhyakō ke adhipati haī aur jinkī utpatti sūrya kī baṛvā rūpdhāraṇī saṃjñā nām kī patnī se huī thī* ».

The latter, the first comprehensive dictionary of the Rājasthānī language, contains a much larger entry on Revanta where his equestrian characteristics have clearly come to the foreground:

80. Quoted from SHARMA, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-1 (my transliteration). Original source: D. SHARMA, *Rāṣṭriya saṃgrahālaya mē saṃgrahit revaṃta kī madhyakālīn mūrti aur V.S. 1682 kī abhilekh*, in « Maru-Bhārati », Jan. 1966, pp. 1-2.

81. A fact which has aroused the astonishment of SHARMA who writes: « It is surprising that in spite of Revanta's mention in literature and depiction in plastic art of the Gupta period, no contemporary epigraph mentions the deity in any context », *op. cit.*, p. 39.

82. Ed. by Śyāmsundardās, Nāgarīpracārīṇisabha, Kāśī, 1929.

83. Ed. by Sītārāmma Lālas, Jodhpur, 1962.

« revamta — sa° pu° aśva ke rūp utpann huve hue ek sūrya ke putra
 kā nām / vi° vi° — yah saṃjñā (chāyā) nāmak sūrya kī
 pantī ke udar se utpann huā / iske aśva ke rūp mē
 utpann hone kā kāraṇ thā ki sūryapatnī saṃjñā baṛvā
 (ghoṛī) kā rūp dhāraṇ kiye hue thī / yah śaniścār kā
 bhāī thā / ise guhyakō kā ādhipatya milā / matāntar se
 ise aśvō kā ādhipatya milā thā / rājā log toraṇ prānt
 mē pratimā yā ghaṭ mē sūrya pūjā kī vidhi ke anusār
 iski pūjā bhī karē, aisā kālikā purāṇa mē likhā milatā
 hai / 2. ghoṛā aśva / (ḍiṃ° ko°) ».

Here Revanta's equine origin is underlined. Interesting to note is that the dictionary contrasts the view that he was entrusted with the lordship of the *guhyakas* (*guhyakō ka ādhipatya*) with another view (*matāntar*) that he was given the lordship of the horses (*aśvō kā ādhipatya*). The cultic function of Revanta is pointed out by reference to the earlier quoted passage of the *Kālikāpurāṇa*.

The culmination of the equine development of Revanta can also be witnessed in the vernaculars of Western India, Gujarātī and Rājasthānī, where a semantic shift came to take place in the word *revanta* itself. Being formerly used as a proper noun only it now also came to acquire a second meaning of « horse ». For this see the extract from the *Rājasthānīśābadaśoṣa* given above and the standard dictionaries of Gujarātī: *A Gujarātī-English Etymological Dictionary* by M. B. Belsare (s.v.) and *Gujarātī Joḍṇīkoś*⁸⁴. This is a rare meaning indeed and the sole reference to it given in the Rājasthānī dictionary is the *ḍiṅgalakoṣa* (*ḍiṃ° ko°*). This is yet another lexicographical work of *ḍiṅgal* words⁸⁵ compiled around the turn of the century by a certain Muraridān of Būṃḍī, Rājasthān (1838-1907)⁸⁶.

Though no example from literature of *revanta* with the meaning « horse » is provided by the *Rājasthānīśābadaśoṣa* the word occurs in a verse in the *Dholā-Mārū rī caupai* written by the Jaina poet Kuśalālābha (c. 1560)⁸⁷ at the behest of the *rājā* of Jaisalmer, Harirāj. The work, which so far has not been properly edited, is the most important of several recasts of the very popular anonymous folk epic *Dholā-Mārū rā dūhā*. Many of these *dūhās* about the lovers Dholā and Mārū were

84. 5th ed., Ahmedābād, 1967, s. *reva(-vaṃ)ta* and *raivata*.

85. Published in parts in the journal *Paramparā*, vols. 3-5, 1899-1900. In the history of the Rājasthānī language *ḍiṅgal*, relatively unalloyed Rājasthānī, is contrasted with *piṅgal*, Rājasthānī mixed with Brajbhāṣa.

86. On the life and works of this poet see M. MENĀRIYĀ, *Rājasthānī bhāṣā aur sāhitya*, Prayāg, Śak 1882 (1960), pp. 333-34.

87. For particulars about Kuśalālābha see M. MENĀRIYĀ, *op. cit.*, pp. 187-88, and H. MAHEŚVARĪ, *Rājasthānī bhāṣā aur sāhitya*, Kalkattā, S. 2017 (1960), pp. 256-63.

assembled by Kuśalalābha and joined together by him by a series of *caupaīs* of his own⁸⁸. The relevant verse reads:

tāsu pāsi chāgaḷi jaḷi bhari thākura taṇi dṛṣṭi ve thari /
deṣi bhāta diyo dīrghāyu revāta thī ūtariyo rāya //
caupaī 7 (my numb.)

The second hemistich says:

« Seeing the bard the king gave (a greeting of) long life (and) descended from the horse (*revāta thī*) ».

Though the *Ḍholā-Māru rī caupaī* is written in Rājasthānī its language betrays a strong influence of Gujarātī⁸⁹. A tentative conclusion that may be drawn is that the usage of the word *revanta* in the sense of « horse » is primarily a Jain one.

revanta, *rev-* and *plu-*

The third part of this study is devoted to the interpretation of the word *revanta* in the indigenous linguistic analysis. Evidence, both indirect and direct, seems to indicate that *revanta* was analysed in such a way that the notion of « horse » could agree with it. Support for this view is above all to be found in the writings of Hemacandra who lived at the time when and at the place where the figure of Revanta attained its maximum development. This was also the formative period of Gujarātī and Rājasthānī where, as observed earlier, a second meaning of *revanta* (« horse ») is attested. For our purpose an examination of the roots *rev-*, *plu-* and their derivatives will be undertaken. The concern here is not to evaluate the correctness of the indigenous interpretation of *revanta* but to underline that it constitutes a further valuable contribution to our understanding of the equine aspect of Revanta.

From the comparative Indo-Iranian perspective *revanta* is ultimately derived from the nom. stem *rai* (« property », « wealth », « richness ») by way of the poss. formation *revāt* (<**rayivat* — « rich », « opulent », « wealthy »)⁹⁰, the Avestan equivalents being *rayay* and *raēvant*⁹¹. Though

88. A Jodhpur MS of the *Ḍholā-Māru rī caupaī* is printed as *Paṇiṣṭa 2* of the Benares edition of the *Ḍholā-Māru rā dūhā* (ed. by Rāmsinh, S. Pārik and N. Svāmī, Vārāṇasī, S. 2016 [1959]). Concerning the relationship between Kuśalalābha's work and the *Ḍholā-Māru rā dūhā* see CH. VAUDEVILLE, *Les Duhā de Ḍholā-Māru*, in « Publications de l'Institut Français d'Indologie », no. 21, Pondichéry, 1962, pp. 4-6. MUNSHI, *Gujarāt and its Literature*, pp. 207-10, summarizes the contents of the work. The present author is preparing an edition and a translation of the *Ḍholā-Māru rī caupaī*.

89. In the verse quoted the Guj. gen. post. p. *taṇi* and abl. post. p. *thī* are employed in place of the Rāj. equivalents *rī* and *sū*.

90. See H. GRASSMANN, *Wörterbuch zum Rigveda*, 4th ed., Wiesbaden, 1964, s. *revāt*; MW s. *rai*; KEWA s. *revā*.

91. See CH. BARTHOLOMAE, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1961, cols. 1484 f. and 1511 f.

occurring adverbially in connection with verbs signifying «to shine forth» etc. (*vi+bhā-* etc.) *revāt* seems never to be used as an attribute of the sun in Veda⁹² but this is sometimes the case in Avesta⁹³. However, contrary to this, the Sanskrit grammarians do not derive *revanta* from *rai* but from the vb. root *rev-*. This root which signifies «to move», «to leap», «to jump» is so far not attested in literature and is therefore not accepted as a true root by Western lexicographers. It is e.g. labelled «probably artificial» by MW, is not included in Whitney's list⁹⁴ and is missing in KEWA. But the root is included in the *Dhātupāṭhas* from the time of Pāṇini and onwards:

revṛ plavagatau

Dhātupāṭha of Pāṇini, I.540

The wording is slightly different in the *Kavikalpadruma* of Vopadeva due to the versified form of that work:

revṛ-ña tu plutau

295c

Rev- belongs to cl. 1.Ā. (the *anubandha* «*ña*»=Ā) and yields the form *revate*. That it seems to be regarded as a living root is indicated by the form *revṛ* which shows that it also possesses an aorist form, the caus. redupl. aor. *arīrevat* in which the root vowel should not be shortened⁹⁵. The semantic content of *rev-* is defined by the expression *plavagati* («moving by leaps» or «frog», lex. only). *Plavagati* is derived from *plu-* which includes «to leap» among its meanings.

Rev- also found its way into other grammatical traditions as is shown by its inclusion in the Pali work *Saddanīti*⁹⁶, written by the Burmese monk Aggavaṃsa in the 12th century:

devu plutagatiyaṃ

855

That it could not have been part of a living tradition by that time is shown by the curious change of *r>d* in *devu*. Next we should turn our attention to some derivatives of the root *plu-* which in many of its meanings coincides with *rev-*. Three such derivatives are of interest here: *plavana*, *pluta* and *pluti*, all of which, mainly lexicographically,

92. See GRASSMAN, *loc. op. cit.*

93. E.g. Yašt 1.46 says:

huvuarəṣāētem aməṣəm raēm auruuat'aspəm yazamaide

«We worship the brilliant sun, the immortal, the opulent who has speedy horses».

Bartholomae: *raēm* acc. of *rayay*. Slightly differently J. NARTEN, *Die Aməša Spəntas in Avesta*, Wiesbaden, 1982, p. 29. n. 10 (*raēm* < **raēuuəm* < *raēuuā*).

94. *The Roots, Verb-Forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*, New Haven, 1945.

95. Sometimes an alternative form *reb-* is given. See the *Sabdakalpadruma* s. *rev-* and cf. also P. V. UPADHYE, *Dhāturupachandrikā with the Dhātupāṭha of Pāṇini*, 2nd ed., Bombay, 1927, pp. 248-49.

96. *Saddanīti. La grammaire palie d'Aggavaṃsa*. Texte établie par H. Smith. II *Dhāṭumālā*, Lund, 1929.

can refer to horses. The first of these terms is attested in Gauḍapāda's commentary to *kārikā* 17 («*adhiṣṭhānāt*») of the *Sāṅkhyakārikā* by Īśvarakṛṣṇa:

«*laṅghanaplavana dhāvana samarthair aśvair yukto rathaḥ*»

Here *plavana* is enumerated together with *laṅghana* and *dhāvana* as different paces of a horse. *Pluta* and *pluti* occur in two Hemacandra's works, the *Anekārthasaṃgraha*⁹⁷, a dictionary of homonyms, and the *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi*, *tiryakkāṇḍa* (ed. see n. 56):

pustake plutam aśvasya gatau plutas
trimātrake

Anek. 183a

dhoritaṃ valgiṭaṃ plutottejitotteritāni ca //
gatayaḥ pañca dhārākhyās turagaṅgāṇām
kramādīmāḥ /

Abhidh. 311b-312a

plutaṃ tu laṅghanam

pakṣimṛgagatyanuhārakam /

Abhidh. 314a

According to Hemacandra *pluta*⁹⁸ constitutes one of the five paces of the horse (*gatayaḥ pañca dhārākhyās turagaṅgāṇām*) the others being known as *dhorita*, *valgiṭa*, *uttejita* and *utterita*. The *Anekārthasaṃgraha* simply defines *pluta* as one of the paces of a horse (*plutam aśvasya gatau*) but the *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi* provides some further information. There *pluta* is compared to the movements of birds and animals (*plutaṃ tu laṅghanam pakṣimṛgagatyanuhārakam*) and refers to the caper of a horse being technically known as the «*curvet*». This pace resembles the leap of a frog.

A further derivative of *plu-*, *plavaga*, may now be examined. This expression, being of course synonymous with *plavagati*, occurs in several *koṣa* works. During the course of time the semantic range of *plavaga* became greatly extended. *Amarakoṣa*, *nānārthavarga*, III.3:24 (ed. see n. 48) reads:

kapau ca plavagaḥ śāpe tv abhiṣaṅgaḥ parābhava

Concerning the expression «*kapau ca plavagaḥ*» two meanings of *plavaga* are stated: a) monkey, b) frog. Only the monkey is directly mentioned but the *ca* obviously presupposes another animal also which is the frog according to other *koṣas* and commentaries. The *Amarapada-vivaraṇa* of Appayārya e.g. refers to the frog (*caśabdād maṇḍūke*) and says:

«*kapau ca plavagaḥ / plavair ullaṅghanair gacchatīti plavagati /*
caśabdād maṇḍūke / yas tu plavenoḍupena gacchati, yaś ca utplutya
gacchati so 'pī plavagaḥ //»

97. *Anekārthasaṃgraha* of Śrī Hemacandrācārya, Kashi Sanskrit Serie 68, Vārāṇasī, 1969.

98. *pluti* is a *var. lect.* of *pluta* in some editions. *Abhidh.* 1245, ed. by O. Boethlingk and C. Rieu, St. Petersburg, 1847, reads «... *plutyuttejitotteritāni ca*».

In *koṣas* written after the *Amarakoṣa* a third meaning of *plavaga*, « the charioteer of the sun », is attested to. Some examples are:

bhambharālyāṇ prasūne ca plavagaḥ
kapibhekayoḥ
*arkasūte*⁹⁹ *pannagas tu padmakāṣṭhe*
bhujaṅgame // *Anekārthasaṃgraha* 123
plavago vānare bheke sārathau
coṣṇadīdhiteḥ *Medinikoṣa* 40

By some commentators of the *Amarakoṣa* the meaning of « charioteer of the sun » was also read into the original. Two examples are afforded by the *Amarapadavivṛti* of Liṅgayasūrin (c. 1150-1300):

« *sākhāmṛge ca maṇḍūke plavagaḥ sūryasārathau //* III.3:52
plavair ullāṅghanair gacchatiti plavagaḥ / III.3:53 »

and the *Amarapadapārijāta* of Mallinātha (the 14th c.):

« *kapau ca plavagaḥ / plavago vānare bheke sārathau coṣṇadīdhiteḥ iti viśvaḥ (pr 26, ślo 28)* »

Even modern commentaries sometimes rely upon later lexicographical traditions when interpreting the *Amarakoṣa*¹⁰⁰ but of the greatest relevance here is a fourth meaning of *plavaga*, at the same time both surprising and revealing, attested to for the first time in the *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi* of Hemacandra. In the *devakāṇḍa* 17a it is stated:

revantas tv arkaretojaḥ plavago hayavāhanaḥ

Here Revanta is referred to and three of his epithets are mentioned, two of them very familiar ones: « the son of the sun » (*arkaretoja*, an unusual cpd) and « he whose vehicle is a horse » (*hayavāhana*). Revanta's epithet *plavaga* may first seem puzzling but can be understood if the roots *rev-* and *plu-* are taken into consideration. By some people in Hemacandra's time *revanta* may have been comprehended as a *pr.ptc.* « the leaping one » that is a horse. This fourth meaning of *plavaga* is sometimes to be met with in *koṣa* writers who made use of the *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi* as can be seen e.g. in the *Anekārthatilaka* of Mahīpa (the latter half of the 14th c.):

plavago vānare bheke revante sāyake 'pi ca // 3.190c-d

99. The cpd *arkasūta* (« the charioteer of the sun ») is not recorded in the Sanskrit dictionaries.

100. See e.g. *Amarakoṣa (Nāmaṅgānuśāsana) of Amarasiṃha*. Ed. with Notes and the Maṇiprabhā Hindī Commentary by Hargovind Śāstrī in *Haridās Sanskrit Series* 30, Vārāṇasī, 1968, where the Hindī commentary reads the three meanings into the *Amarakoṣa*: « "plavaga" ke bandar. meḍhak sūrya kā sārathī tīn arth hāi ».

To summarize what has been said so far:

- a) *rev-* and *plu-* largely coincide in semantic content, the former root defined by the latter in the *Dhātupāṭha*.
- b) Derivatives of *plu-* applied to monkeys, frogs and horses. Certain connections between the two last-mentioned ones.
- c) A third meaning of *plavaga* (« charioteer of the sun ») attested to around A.D. 1000.
- d) *revanta* and *plavaga* occur in juxtaposition in the *Abhidhāna-cintāmaṇi* (the 12th c.), both expressions probably conveying the notion of a jumping horse.

As regards the old association of horses with frogs attention is drawn to an enlightening article by W. O'Flaherty¹⁰¹.

In the foregoing pages only indirect evidence has been presented to support the analysis of *revanta* as a derivative of *rev-*. But direct evidence can also be produced by turning to the category of grammatical literature called *uṇādisūtra*. These texts intend to demonstrate how certain nouns have been derived from vb. roots by additions of some rather uncommon suffixes. Thus we find a series of roots taking the suffix *-anta* (e.g. *vasanta*, « spring », is analyzed in this manner). Two such *uṇādisūtra* works, dating from a later period, include *rev-* among the roots possessing the *-anta* formation. Thus the *Uṇādisūtra* of Bhoja¹⁰² gives the following list:

jṛviśivahivasibhūjirevasādhībāsigaḍimaḍinandibhyo 'ntac 487

A longer list is to be found in Hemacandra's *Uṇādigāṇasūtra*¹⁰³, constituting a part of the *Bṛhadvṛtti* which is Hemacandra's autocommentary on his grammatical treatise *Siddhahaimacandra*:

tṛjibhūvadivahivasibhāsyadisādhimadigaḍigaḍimaḍinandirevibhyah
221

The form produced from *rev-* is expressly interpreted as referring to our deity. Daṇḍanātha Nārāyaṇa, the commentator of Bhoja's work, says in his *vṛtti* « *revantaḥ sūryaputraḥ* » while Hemacandra in his autocom-

101. *Contributions to an Equine Lexicology with Special Reference to Frogs*, in JAOS, vol. 98 (1977), pp. 475-78. The author gives examples from the *Mahābhārata* where excellent horses are compared to frogs (*maṇḍūkākṣa*, etc., p. 477, n. 7) and points to the Vedic custom of placing a frog below the *vedi* at the *āsvamedha* sacrifice (p. 478, n. 12).

102. *The Uṇādisūtras of Bhoja with the Vṛtti of Daṇḍanātha Nārāyaṇa and the Uṇādisūtras of the Kātantra School with the Vṛtti of Durgasimha*. Ed. by T. R. Chintamani in Madras University Sanskrit Series, no. 7, Madras, 1934.

103. *Das Uṇādigāṇasūtra des Hemachandra*. Hrsg. mit dem selbstverfassten Kommentare des Autors v. J. Kirste, Bombay, 1895.

mentary states that « *ebhyaṣṭidantaḥ pratyayo bhavati... revṛḍ pavi*¹⁰⁴ *gatau / revantaḥ sūryaputraḥ* ». Revanta as the son of the sun (*sūrya-putra*) is here clearly pointed out.

That *rev-* is regarded as a productive root by the Sanskrit grammarians is demonstrated by the fact that also other derivatives of that root are mentioned by them. Mādhava Sāyaṇa, brother of the Ṛgvedic commentator and author of the *Sarvadarśana Saṅgraha*, gives the following examples in his *Mādhaviyadhātuvṛtti*¹⁰⁵, a commentary on the *Dhātupāṭha* of Pāṇini:

revṛ plavagatau / plavagatiḥ plutagatiḥ / revate ityādi /
*revā aci t̥ap / revanaḥ anudāttettvād*¹⁰⁶ *vā calanārihatvād vā yuc*
 I.329

Here the proper noun *revana* and *revā*, another name for the river Narmadā, are both derived from *rev-*. By this derivation the meandering course of the river is probably suggested. Though there is consistency in the Indian tradition there is disagreement among Western scholars concerning the etymology of *revā*¹⁰⁷.

The endeavour to connect *revanta* with the notion of « horse » in the older Indian grammatical tradition is also met with in modern, particular Gujarātī, lexicography. The following three examples will illustrate this.

First we may have a look at *Yuktikalpataru* v. 56, which has been quoted earlier, given by Kulkarni among the supplementary verses in his edition of king Bhoja's *Sālihotra* (see n. 38) and the expression *revantaṁ pūjayet* occurring there. The editor interprets *revantaṁ* not as a proper noun but as a pr.ptc.acc. of *rev-* with the meaning « the leaping one » (p. 57). There can be no reason why *revanta* here should not be understood as the proper noun Revanta as in so many other passages in the Purāṇas and the *aśvaśāstra* texts. But it is very interesting to note the desire of the editor to connect *revanta* with *rev-* though it is not done in the manner of the *uṇadisūtra*.

Turning to the two Gujarātī dictionaries referred to earlier we also find the idea of the horse present, in different ways, in the etymologies of *revanta* offered by them. In *A Gujarātī-English Etymological Dictionary* by Belsare s.v. *revanta* is connected with Vedic *arvan* (« swift,

104. The root *pav-* seems to be a *var. lect.* of *plav-* (*plu-*) according to certain grammarians, e.g. Maitreyarākṣita. See N. L. WESTERGAARD, *Radices linguae sanscritae*, Bonn, 1841, p. 351, col. b: « 39. *revṛ plavagatau* Maitr. et Kt. *revṛ* 40. *plava gatau* dissolvunt. *pava* alii, teste Maitr. ».

105. *The Mādhaviyā Dhātuvṛtti* (A Treatise on Sanskrit Roots based on the *Dhātupāṭha* of Pāṇini) by Sāyaṇācārya. Ed. by Swami D. Shastri in *Prācya Bhāratī* Series 1, Vārāṇasī, 1964.

106. The printed text reads *anuttādittvād*.

107. Of unknown etymology (MW); derived from *rai* (KEWA); derived from a hypothetical word **re* (« sand ») + poss. suffix (R. L. TURNER, *A Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages*, London, 1966, s.v.). Cf. also K. HOFFMANN, *Aufsätze zur Indoiranistik*, hrsg. v. J. Narten, Wiesbaden, 1976, p. 402.

speedy and horse »). This etymology is, of course, unacceptable, the author probably being misled by the vague resemblance in the consonantal phonemic structure of the two words. But again what is striking and worthy of notice is the wish of Belsare to read the notion of «horse» into *revanta*. The entry on *revanta* in the *Jodṇikoś* reads as follows:

« *reva(-vaṃ)ta puṇṇ° (saṃ.rev=kūdvū)-ghoḍo* »

Anew the etymology of the long-standing traditio is presented. *Revanta* is derived from *rev-* and the Gujarātī equivalent of the Sanskrit root, *kūdvū* (« to leap »), is given.

Thus mythological, historical and linguistic data enable us to comprehend the figure of *Revanta* from many angles and they also emphasize the fact that, during the course of time, the equine aspect came to overshadow all the others of this divinity. The latent possibilities inherent in his equestrian qualities became, above all, realized in Western and Central India due to, as it seems, their capacity of responding to the particular historical conditions prevailing in these areas at the time. The last phase of this development, as linguistic evidence indicates, mainly reflects lexicographical traditions. Moreover, to judge from our sources dating after c. A.D. 1100, it would appear that, although *revanta* used as a proper noun refers to a Hindu deity, the word in both its meanings occurs, in no small measure, in writings of scholars and poets with affiliations to Jainism.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- CII = Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum
 EI = Epigraphia Indica
 JAOS = Journal of the American Oriental Society
 KEWA = M. MAYRHOFER, *Kurzgefasstes Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen*
 MW = M. MONIER-WILLIAMS, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*
 ZDMG = Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft